



# Reflect

## **Reconciliation Action Plan**

**UnitingCare Wesley Bowden**  
March 2025 – October 2026







## **Acknowledgement of Country**

We commit ourselves to the reconciliation journey and to walking together with the First Nations people of these lands, waters, and skies.

We recognise that the land we work on is the land of the Kurna people, and that this land was never given up.

We honour the wisdom, knowledge, and skills of the Kurna people and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart on the journey towards treaty and truth telling, with determination and hope.

Our commitment to reconciliation includes commissioning a First Nations artwork to form a key part of the UnitingCare Wesley Bowden identity.





**“We are a dedicated and passionate community of staff and volunteers who embrace inclusivity, celebrate diversity, respect lived experience, and are committed to reconciliation.”**

**Helen Sheppard**  
Chief Executive, UnitingCare Welsey Bowden



# Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia congratulates UnitingCare Wesley Bowden on continuing its reconciliation journey by formally endorsing UnitingCare Wesley Bowden second Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Through this plan, UnitingCare Wesley Bowden continues to play an important role in a network of more than 2,500 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP continues the journey and primes the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables UnitingCare Wesley Bowden to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations UnitingCare Wesley Bowden on your second Reflect RAP, and I look forward to following your continuing reconciliation journey.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
*Reconciliation Australia*







**Introducing the artist  
of our reconciliation artwork**





**We proudly acknowledge the First Nations artwork used in this Reconciliation Action Plan:**

**Artist:** I am Keita Nam, a proud Kaurua, Narungga and Maori woman

**Artwork name:** 'Connecting with community'

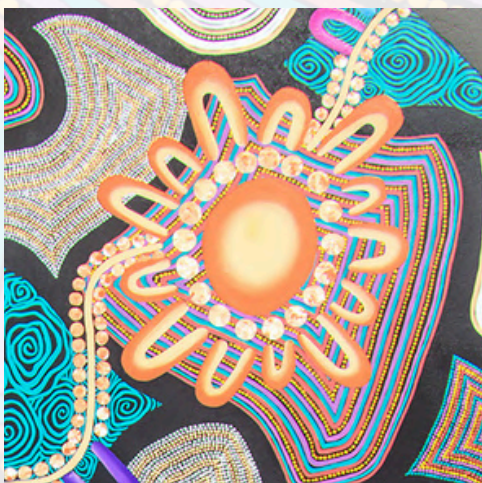
**Artist Statement:** "This artwork signifies UnitingCare Wesley Bowden (UCWB) as a team and their work within the community, creating strong relationships, and helping shape the bright future of Bowden."

**Date of creation:** 7th November, 2024

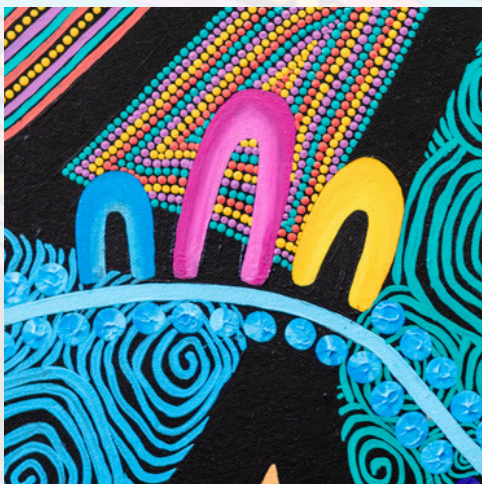




**Art element #1:** The big meeting place represents UCWB and the workplace coming together as a team. The 'U' looking symbols throughout the artwork are people sitting.

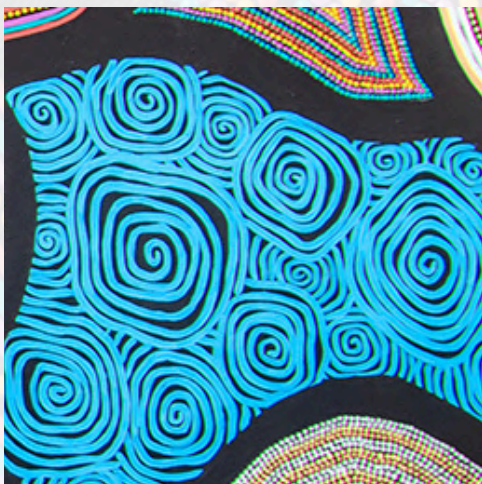


**Art element #2:** The 3 smaller meeting places (orange, green and blue) represent the diverse groups of people in the community that UCWB work with and assist. The people symbols are ranging in size to represent UCWB's work with babies to elderly and everyone in between.



**Art element #3:** These lines with people represent the people you meet out in the community, along their different life paths.

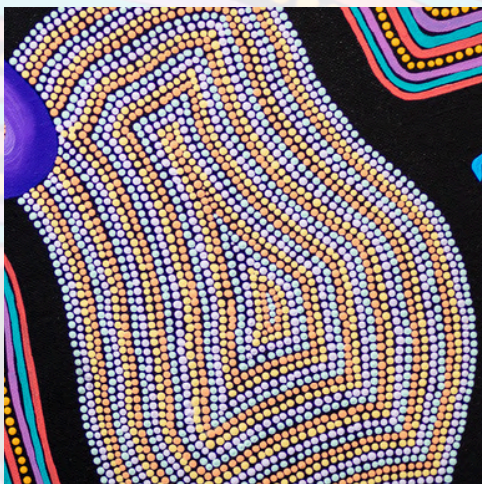




**Art element #4:** The swirls represent water; in this case the wetlands that used to be in the Bowden area.



**Art element #5:** The design elements with both lines and dots combined represents the changes in Bowden – how it has and continues to evolve to this day.



**Art element #6:** These dots represent the bright future of UCWB, the people impacted by UCWB's services, and the community of Bowden.





**Our Business**



For 150 years, UCWB has walked alongside people who stand at the margins of our communities. We have helped create positive futures built on kindness, equity, and community. Today, we connect with people across the lifespan, from our childcare and child and family services to our work with older people, and our services that build financial health, and those that enable full citizenship for those with mental health and disability.

Our team of 240 staff and volunteers are our key asset in supporting our customers. We have a diverse and multicultural workforce serving an equally diverse community and we currently employ five Aboriginal workers.

UCWB is located at 77 Gibson St, Bowden and Torrensville Community Childcare Centre is located at 80 East St, Torrensville. Many of our community support programs operate across metropolitan Adelaide.

UCWB exists to build connected and thriving communities.







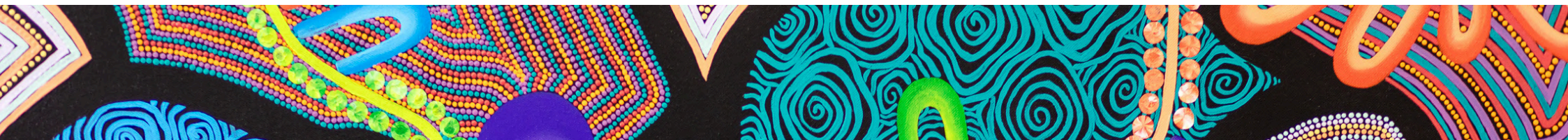
# **Our Reconciliation Action Plan**



# Our Commitment

We respect First Nations people as the custodians of our land and we aspire to progress in our journey towards treaty, truth telling and reconciliation. We believe the cultures and histories of the First Nations people and the Treaty, Truth, Voice journey Australia is on are critical to our future as a country, community, and organisation. It is therefore important to create awareness, to listen deeply and to take action towards a fair and just nation. It is our intent to ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel safe, are treated equitably; that their story and their culture is respected and supported whenever and however they engage with UCWB.

Creating and actioning a Reconciliation Action Plan aligns to UCWB's purpose that together we build connected and thriving communities. We recognise that individually, organisationally and societally, we are on a journey towards treaty, truth telling and reconciliation and we commit ourselves to being an organisation that is culturally humble and which values, respects and ensures the participation and influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

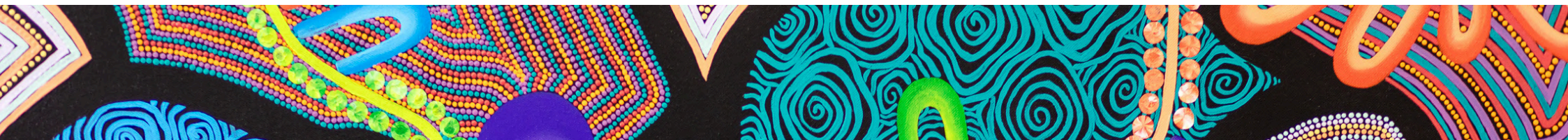




We wish to publicly commit to:

- building on the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by ensuring equal opportunity in our workplace
- delivering culturally safe, accessible and responsive services
- deepening our partnerships with Aboriginal organisations
- developing meaningful relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and
- providing advocacy for Aboriginal people and organisations.

We embrace the opportunity to embed First Nations wisdom and knowledges into the way we work, to achieve better outcomes for our customers and enrich our organisation and the wider community. We value the partnerships we have with Aboriginal Organisations and are committed to our reconciliation journey to ensure those partnerships are culturally safe, inclusive, and prioritise and celebrate the voice and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





# Our Approach

UCWB is committed to accountability, respect and partnership with the communities in which we work. Our Reconciliation Action Plan includes an implementation strategy that identifies actions and engages all areas of our business. Our Board and Executive Leadership Team will regularly review our progress, and we will report our achievements and our learnings to our staff, our partners, and in our annual report. Our ambition is a more reconciled community, ensuring UCWB is a safe and culturally respectful business to engage with, work and volunteer in.

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan will guide our reconciliation activities across all areas of the organisation. We are committed to working collaboratively and in allyship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to enable genuine engagement that is respectful, inclusive, and culturally humble.

Our Executive Leadership Team will sponsor our reconciliation activities to ensure oversight and accountability, while the required resources will be invested to increase our capabilities, develop our staff, and improve our engagement with First Nations organisations and communities.





Staff will be allocated time to participate in the Reconciliation Working Group to discuss, develop and deliver reconciliation activities and monitor the implementation and delivery of the Plan. Our journey is championed by our Chief Executive, who will drive internal engagement and awareness of the Reconciliation Action Plan across the organisation.

We believe our Plan's activities can be achieved within 18 months, and we will continue to accommodate and embrace the time, resources and leadership that achieving our reconciliation ambitions will require. We are deeply committed to this journey of reflection and to adjusting our systems, processes, and ways of working.





# Our Journey

UCWB has been on the reconciliation journey since 2015 when our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan was developed, which was endorsed with implementation commencing in 2017. Many of the outcomes of this initial work have been enduring, including developing partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, delivering cultural awareness training for staff, and visibly demonstrating respect for First Nations people and cultures within our workplace.

While the actions and intent of Reflect RAP were gradually implemented across the organisation an internal Cultural Inclusion survey in 2020 found that further improvements could still be made in creating more inclusive services and genuine engagement with Aboriginal-led organisations and communities. In late 2021 our Executive reviewed our current commitments and activities regarding reconciliation, and a decision was made to revisit and strengthen our foundational work. In February 2022 UCWB reformed its Reconciliation Work Group to coordinate internal activities and revisit the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan as an organisation.

While we continue to maintain and embed many of the original actions identified in our earlier reconciliation activities, we recommit ourselves to reconciliation and embarking on a new journey at a historic time. We are continuing to develop a workplace that is culturally humble and values, respects and ensures participation and influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





A photograph of an older woman with short, wavy grey hair, smiling warmly at a man whose profile is visible on the right side of the frame. The woman is wearing a black top with a gold-colored geometric pattern on the shoulders and a thin gold necklace. The background is softly blurred, showing green indoor plants and a window. The text 'Our Partnerships & Current Activities' is overlaid in the bottom right corner in a bold, dark red font.

## **Our Partnerships & Current Activities**





## Our Partnerships

We have important partnerships that direct and support advocacy, service delivery and engagement with First Nations people.

We partner with Tauondi Aboriginal Community College to provide financial literacy to students, grow students' financial knowledge and financial literacy and also promote self-determination and advocacy. Our financial wellbeing services also outreach to the Aboriginal Community Connect Hendon Kurlana Tampawardli site, where we provide flexible, walk in financial counselling and literacy in a culturally welcoming environment.

We are partnered with South Australian Financial Counsellors Association (SAFCA) and Maurice Blackburn Lawyers to advocate for change and to challenge the Name and Shame campaigns in the Northern Territory that disproportionately name Aboriginal people for fines and infringements that are the result of poverty and financial insecurity. The campaign has lobbied the Attorney General's Department to challenge the practice of naming and shaming individuals subject to systemic injustice. UCWB has also joined a campaign with national and state-based Non-Government Organisation's and Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation's to advocate for and challenge the process of accessing superannuation by relatives of deceased persons, particularly for First Nations persons who are disproportionately impacted by the current process due to identification requirements.





We have a formal partnership with InComPro to deliver the Martinthi Aboriginal Kinship Care program. Martinthi supports kinship carers of First Nations children. The partnership and program thrive on the respective expertise, knowledge, and experience of the partners. The expertise of First Nations leaders is embedded into the program through weekly cultural supervision provided by the Martinthi Cultural Consultant.

Our partnership with InComPro extends to the establishment of South Australia's first Aboriginal Financial Counselling Scholarship to enable more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access culturally safe financial wellbeing services and the delivery of our early intervention family support services.

We work in collaboration with KWY Aboriginal Corporation in the delivery of the Walking Together (Intensive Family Support) program. Walking Together aims to prevent the separation of children from their primary caregivers due to child protection concerns.





## Our Activities

UCWB has developed a reconciliation commitment statement, an honest, authentic, transparent, and evolving statement, that is included on our website, meeting agendas and made available to staff to include on their email signature. All staff have the opportunity to give an Acknowledgement of Country at staff meetings to acknowledge the Kaurna people, pay respects to Elders and share their own journey and reflections on reconciliation.

We celebrate and participate in a wide range of recognised national occasions during the year, including National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, NAIDOC Week, and Indigenous Literacy Day. Our individual support and capacity building services also enable customers to participate in specific occasions important and relevant to them. Martinthi attend and host events that celebrate First National cultures and justice campaigns including Rec in the West, Sonder's Closing the Gap and the annual NAIDOC march and Family Day. Torrensville Community Child Care Centre conducts environmental learning activities for children to engage in during National Reconciliation Week such as creating artwork using traditional mediums used by First Nations people, including clay and charcoal.

We have developed the Reconciliation Library, now renamed the Allyship Library, with online and hardcopy resources available for staff and volunteers to develop knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture, achievements and ambitions.





We promote learning and understanding through monthly information and discussion sessions. These include conversations on contemporary issues impacting First Nations people such as the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the criminal justice system and the importance of Raise the Age campaign. At induction all staff complete online CUBE training (Cultural Understanding Better Engagement) to ensure a strong baseline of understanding and insight into Aboriginal cultures and engagement strategies. We also provide all staff with a full day face to face Cultural Awareness training session facilitated by Bookabee Australia, who specialise in Aboriginal Cultural Sensitivity and Respect Training. This session is followed up with a half day refresher session for all staff at a later interval.

We advocate to Raise the Age of criminal responsibility in South Australia to prevent the over-incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Finally, we have the Reconciliation Working Group which, as well as overseeing the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan, facilitates access to information and resources across the organisation.





**"We are building communities where everybody is connected,  
everyone thrives and everyone can reach their full potential"**

**Helen Sheppard**  
Chief Executive, UnitingCare Welsey Bowden



# Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	October 2025	<i>Head of Impact and Customer Experience</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Research</b> best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</li> </ul>	October 2025	<i>Head of Impact and Customer Experience</i>
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Circulate Reconciliation</b> Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.</li> </ul>	May 2025	<i>Senior Business Services Officer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ensure</b> Reconciliation Working Group members participation in an external NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May- 3 June 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Encourage</b> and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May- 3 June 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Communicate</b> our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.</li> </ul>	March, August, October 2025 January, April, July, October 2026	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify</b> external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	September 2025	<i>Executive Manager Services</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify</b> RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</li> </ul>	September 2025	<i>Executive Manager Services</i>
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Research</b> best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.</li> </ul>	December 2025	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Conduct</b> a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	January 2026	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>



# Respect



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain</b> our understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.</li> </ul>	October 2025 (Annual training)	<i>People and Culture Consultant</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Conduct</b> a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.</li> </ul>	February 2026	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain</b> our understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.</li> </ul>	April 2025	<i>Head of Impact and Customer Experience</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increase</b> staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>	June 2025 Ongoing	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain</b> awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>	June 2025	<i>Senior Business Services Officer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduce</b> our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.</li> </ul>	June 2025	<i>Senior Business Services Officer</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ensure</b> our Reconciliation Working Group members participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</li> </ul>	First week in July 2025	<i>Chief Executive</i>



# Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop</b> a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.</li> </ul>	Sept 2025	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Maintain</b> our understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</li> </ul>	June 2025 Ongoing	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop</b> a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</li> </ul>	February 2026	<i>Head of Finance</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Investigate</b> Supply Nation membership.</li> </ul>	February 2026	<i>Lead People &amp; Culture</i>



# Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• <b>Maintain</b> a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	March 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	• <b>Maintain</b> a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2025	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
	• <b>Establish</b> Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	March 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• <b>Maintain</b> resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	• <b>Engage</b> senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	• <b>Maintain</b> a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	March 2025	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
	• <b>Define</b> appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	June 2025	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	• <b>Contact</b> Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss important RAP correspondence.	June annually	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
	• <b>Contact</b> Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
	• <b>Complete</b> and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	• <b>Register</b> via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.	March 2026	<i>Executive Assistant</i>





## Contact details:

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*Credit: Elana Bailey Photography*